



5/7/15 Rep. Marcia Hovey-Wright Talking Points

- Good morning.
- Thank you, Chairman Nesbitt for allowing me to testify today on renewable energy.
- With our current clean energy policy expiring this year, the Legislature will set our state on a new path when it comes to energy generation.
- As we weigh different options, I urge members of this committee to consider the benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency standards.
- We have a true opportunity to build on the success of our thriving clean energy sector...
- Which is creating jobs, reining in costs and protecting the health of Michigan families.
- Increasing Michigan's use of renewable energy will create good-paying jobs, spark investment and launch new businesses in our state.
- Our clean energy sector supports 20,500 jobs and \$5 billion in annual economic activity.

- And renewable energy can attract even more investment and more good-paying jobs...
- Jobs that can't be shipped overseas.
- Expanding our use of clean energy will build upon our manufacturing strength, talent and know-how...
- Growing Michigan businesses that make energy efficient appliances and components for wind turbines.
- Businesses need certainty that we're on a track to increase our use of renewable energy so they can continue investing, expanding and creating good-paying jobs.
- But jobs aren't the only economic benefit of clean energy.
- Renewable energy and energy efficiency help rein in rising energy costs.
- Michigan has the highest energy costs in the region and this makes us uncompetitive.
- Moving to clean, renewable energy and reducing energy waste will make electricity more affordable for families and businesses.
- Advances in technology and private-sector competition have driven down the cost of renewable energy over the past several years.
- In fact, renewable energy now costs less than all other forms of energy.
- Beyond the economic benefits of clean energy...
- And perhaps most importantly...

- Using more renewable energy and reducing energy waste will reduce pollution and give Michigan cleaner air and water.
- It will protect our Great Lakes, reduce illness, and ultimately save lives.
- Reducing pollution by moving to renewable energy like wind or solar means a healthier Michigan, cleaner water and cleaner air to breathe.
- Many of us agree that increasing our use of renewable energy is important, but we have different ideas on how to get there.
- I feel strongly that we need to maintain and expand our current renewable energy and energy efficiency standards.
- The fact is, before we had these standards, the utilities failed to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- Back in 2008, the Legislature set goals to push the utilities.
- Since then, they've met and exceeded the goals—saving us money and reducing pollution along the way.
- It's time now to set the bar higher.
- Mr. Chairman, as you know, I'm not an energy policy expert.
- In fact, there are many of them present in this room that I'm sure will be happy to answer any technical policy questions you may have.
- I'm here today because I have a strong personal interest in clean energy policy.
- And it's also important to my constituents back at home.

- In Muskegon, we've seen first-hand the economic development potential of renewable energy.
- Last year, we saw cargo ship after cargo ship filled with parts for wind turbines coming into the state through the Port of Muskegon.
- And we're so fortunate to be home to the Michigan Alternative Renewable Energy Center.
- MAREC is a partnership between the City of Muskegon, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and Grand Valley State University.
- Its mission is to be a destination point for business and technology development with a focus on the alternative and renewable energy sector.
- Muskegon was once a major hub for auto manufacturing.
- And our workers and factories are primed and ready to begin producing wind turbines and solar panels.
- Muskegon Community College is training students to work in the renewable energy industry.
- They're taking classes like "Wind and Solar Installation" and "Applied Alternative & Renewable Energy."
- The potential for economic development is tremendous and that's why I'm here today.
- So I thank you for allowing me to testify on this issue which I am so passionate about.

- I appreciate you letting me present on the economic and health benefits of renewable energy.
- I know you have your policy ideas, and that we'll soon learn more about Chairman Nofs' priorities as well.
- I respectfully request that you hold a hearing on the Powering Michigan's Future energy package recently introduced by me and other members of my caucus.
- I look forward to having a robust debate, making sure all parties are at the table and we work together to plan for Michigan's energy future.
- Thank you.